

Applicant notes that in this and all prior Office Actions, no acknowledgement has been made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119 as requested in the original filing of this application. Acknowledgement of the claim, or notification that the priority documents must be retransmitted, is greatly appreciated.

### **I. Disposition of Claims**

Claims 1, 2, and 12-17 are pending in this application. Claims 1 and 12 are independent. The remaining claims depend, directly or indirectly, from claims 1 and 12.

### **II. Rejection(s) under 35 U.S.C § 112**

Claims 1, 2, and 12-17 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112 as indefinite. Claims 1 and 12 have been amended in this reply to clarify the present invention recited. No new matter has been added by way of the amendment. To the extent that this rejection may still apply to the amended claims, the rejection is respectfully traversed.

The Office Action states that the phrase “plate-like” in claim 1 renders the claim indefinite. Accordingly, “plate-like” has been removed from claim 1, rendering the rejection moot.

The Office Action states that the phrase “can be” in claims 1 and 12 renders the claims indefinite. The phrase “can be” has not been found in claim 1. The phrase “can be” has been amended to “is” in claim 12. Accordingly, claim 12 is no longer indefinite based on this language.

The Office Action states that the phrase “it” in claims 1 and 12 renders the claims indefinite. The phrase “it” has not been found in claim 1. The phrase “it” has been

amended to refer to a specific element previously introduced in claim 12. Accordingly, claim 12 is no longer indefinite based on this language.

The Office Action states that claims 1 and 2 would be allowable if rewritten or amended to overcome the rejection(s) under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph. Applicant believes that claims 1 and 12 were intended to be referenced in part 5 of the Office Action. Accordingly, claims 1 and 12 have been amended, and are believed to be allowable. Dependent claims 2, and 13-17 are allowable for at least the same reasons. Accordingly, withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

### III. Conclusions

Applicant believes this reply to be fully responsive to all outstanding issues and place this application in condition for allowance. If this belief is incorrect, or other issues arise, do not hesitate to contact the undersigned or his associates at the telephone number listed below. Please apply any charges not covered, or any credits, to Deposit Account 50-0591 (Reference Number 06756.006001).

Date: 4/4/03

Respectfully submitted,

  
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**APPENDIX A: MARKED-UP COPY OF THE CLAIMS**

1. (Amended) A method of fastening a building board to a framework of a building, which is characterized in that a building board having a flat [plate-like] configuration and provided on the rear surface thereof with engaging protrusions, and an elongated fixture which is adapted to be detachably engaged with the building board are employed, and that the building board is assembled in advance together with the elongated fixture through an engagement between the engaging protrusions and the elongated fixture, and then the elongated fixture is fixed to the framework of a building, thereby fastening the building board to the framework of a building.

12. (Amended) A method of fastening a building board to a framework of a building by making use of a fixture; wherein said fixture is constructed such that said fixture[it] comprises a main body which is designed to be entirely or partially contacted with the rear surface of a building board; engaging holes formed in the main body; a rising portion formed at one end in the longitudinal direction of the main body; an engaging region formed at or near said rising portion; an extension portion extending from the distal edge of said rising portion in a direction away from and parallel with said main body; and an engaging tongue formed at the other end in the longitudinal direction of the main body; wherein said engaging tongue is positioned and shaped such that said engaging tongue[it] is[can be] inserted into said engaging region of the fixture attached to a neighboring building board as a couple of building boards each having the fixture attached to the rear surface thereof are positioned neighboring in vertical direction; and

wherein after a first building board to be disposed at a lower level is fastened at first to the framework of a building by taking advantage of the fixture attached to the rear

surface of the building board, a second building board to be disposed over said first building board is placed along the upper horizontal edge of said first building board and fastened to the framework of a building by inserting the engaging tongue of the fixture attached to the rear surface of the second building board into the engaging region formed in the fixture of the first building board.